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ABSTRACT

The relationship of gender to the profession of teaching and curricular decision making is explored from a feminist point of view in this paper. The following questions were considered: (1)What are the experiences of those women who are preparing to teach and have an orientation toward teaching which is empowering for themselves and their students rather than adhering to set curricula and basic skills? (2) How have they contended with their years in patriarchal institutions? (3) Do these women deny their femininity when they teach? (4) How does their gender enter into the process of learning to teach? and (5) How do gender qualities such as assertiveness, confidence, empathy and nurturance influence their curricular and pedagogical decisions? This paper explores the ways one woman's gender influenced the process of learning to teach through her experience during her final year of teacher preparation. Ways in which she was able to realize her empowering orientation toward teaching during her last field experience as well as during her student teaching are examined. A five-page list of references concludes the document. (JD)

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LEARNING TO TEACH: THE EMPOWERING QUALITY OF NURTURANCE

A paper presented at the annual Bergamo Conference

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> . . . women as educators are in a unique position to sharpen public consciousness of the social bases for domination of women in schooling and to act as agents of transition to new educational forms and practices. . . . For women who are teachers the starting point is you in your own situation. (Zaret, 1975, pp. 45, 47)

> We believe that a feminist social science should begin with the recognition that 'the personal', direct experience, underlies all behaviours and actions. We need to find out what it is that we know and what it is that we experience. We need to reclaim, name and rename our experiences and our knowledge of the social world we live in and daily construct. We conceptualize this world through a language provided for us by sexist society, and by a thoroughly androcentric social science. We need to reject this imposed language and to construct our own social science, a social science which starts from women's experience of women's reality. (Stanley & Wise, 1983, p. 165)

What do we know about teaching as "women's work?" Through this work women can extend their traditional mothering role outside the home into the classroom and utilize those qualities classified as feminine such as empathy and nurturance. In addition, choosing to teach has also meant that women could easily combine a career with a family (Lortie, 1975) and, until the teacher surplus, allowed them to be flexible geographically (Nieva & Gutek, 1981). Like other occupations dominated by women (e.g., social work, nursing and library work), teaching has low status and pay, offers few opportunities for advancement (Andersen, 1983; Bardwick & Douvan, 1971; Mazza, 1984), and has been described as a "quasi profession" because of the lack of control and autonomy its members have (Spencer, 1986). More importantly, as women move into and begin to dominate an occupation, often the work is viewed as less valuable, less skilled, in need of external control and deserving of decreased wages (Apple, 1985). Certainly exploring the connection between gender[1] and teaching could enlarge our understandings of teachers and their work (Lather, 1985). However, this exploration must be grounded in the experiences and perspectives of those women who teach. Do they view teaching as the low status, "quasi

profession" that others describe? These women must be able to name their knowledge and experiences. To do otherwise is to perpetuate the oppressing nature of our patriarchal society and the masculine paradigm of the social sciences (Stanley & Wise, 1983).

Though women are the majority sex in elementary schools, constituting 83.4 percent of public elementary teachers in 1982-83 (Feistritzer, 1983), in many ways educational institutions are foreign to women's lives and may even marginalize them (Martel & Peterat, 1985). Their experiences as women are often omitted or distorted within the curriculum. Women's intuitive, contextual style of thinking is less valued than the logical abstract style characteristic of men (Martel & Peterat, 1985; Mitrano, 1981). The feminine style of achievement through cooperation with others is less preferred in schools than the more masculine style of achievement through individual effort. As teachers, women are expected to socialize students into the prevailing norms and values which perpetuate discrimination against their own sex (Grumet, 1981). Schools themselves have been described as patriarchal institutions not only because men retain the positions of leadership and policy making (Spender, 1981) but also because of the hierarchical chain of command, the centralized decision-making (Macdonald & Macdonald, 1981), the technological consciousness, the competition, the compartmentalized knowledge (Taubman, 1982) as well as the orientation toward task completion and achievement (Pinar, 1983). If schools exclude and devalue women's experiences, their styles of thinking and interacting with others, can women teachers build a home there or must they exist as boarders (Grumet, 1981)?

Grumet (1981) also argues the position of women teachers as boarders in schools is related to the lack of nurturance there. Given the

masculine ethos of educational institutions, women are encouraged to become alienated from themselves, their femininity and their experience of nurturance. Certainly it would be simplistic to suggest that all women teachers would nurture their students if only the patriarchal nature of these institutions were eliminated. While Grumet's assertion that schools generally are not nurturing places has a ring of truth, we also need to explore ways that women who teach find ways to nurture. What are the experiences of those women who have a more nurturing, empowering[2] approach to teaching? Not all teachers align themselves with the more impersonal, task oriented, back-to-basics goals of schools although these goals in various ways must influence teachers' work. Assuming that nurturance does not occur in schools denies my own experiences as an elementary teacher who learned to nurture others through my teaching. On the other hand, at times I supported the growing emphasis on basic skills and at other times felt vaguely uneasy and resentful of this reductionist approach to teaching. But it was also the constraints of this basic skills emphasis which precipitated my leaving the elementary classroom.

What are the experiences of those women who are preparing to teach and have an orientation toward teaching which is empowering for themselves and their students rather than adhering to set curricula and basic skills? How have they contended with their years in patriarchal institutions? Do these women deny their femininity when they teach? How does their gender enter into the process of learning to teach? More specifically, in what ways do gender qualities such as assertiveness, confidence, empathy and nurturance influence their curricular and pedagogical decisions? The focus of this paper is exploring the ways one woman's gender influences the process of learning to teach through her experiences during her final year of teacher

preparation. In what ways was she able to realize her empowering orientation toward teaching during her last field experience as well as during her student teaching? In order to establish a framework for the portrayal of this woman's teaching experiences, I will review the relationship of gender to teaching and curricular decision making.

GENDER AND TEACHING

Gender is the "absent presence" (Apple, 1983, p. 625) in our knowledge of teaching. Since teaching is largely women's work, gender is a part of the lives of these women, influences their work in powerful yet subtle ways and may also help explain the way society views the teaching profession as well as the views of those women who teach. Gender needs to become an explicit component of our research on teaching (Lather, 1985).

The 19th Century: Teaching Became Women's Work

Teaching opened up to women because of a combination of societal changes: urbanization, immigration, and industrialization. The change in our economic structure from home production to market-oriented production to industrialization (although certainly women continued to be productive in the home) meant that middle-class and upper-class daughters were freed from the responsibility of working in the family business and could take advantage of educational opportunities (Strober & Tyack, 1980). For those middle-class daughters whose fathers could not afford to support them prior to their marriages (Allmendinger, 1979), teaching provided a suitable pre-marital occupation. These daughters would not need to become economic liabilities to their families. Teaching provided them with a more genteel form of employment than work in textile mills or domestic service (Hoffman, 1981). With industrialization came urbanization--the movement of people from rural areas to emerging urban areas where they could take advantage of

these employment opportunities. Often, the children in these families were not needed as family workers so they provided a population in need of schooling. Since women were paid one-half or less the salaries of male teachers (Melder, 1972), employing women stretched the limited school budgets. Another societal change, the influx of immigrants during this time brought a concern that foreign-born children become socialized into the prevailing norms and values (Greene, 1978). Schools were the vehicle through which this socialization would take place. Who better to socialize these immigrant and lower-class children than women since they supposedly possessed superior moral character as well as nurturing qualities?

Not only were women (including those who taught) invested with a superior moral character and nurturing qualities, they were also supposed to possess the womanly virtues of "piety, purity, submissiveness and domesticity" (Welter, 1966, p. 152). Horace Mann, a leading school reformer of the nineteenth century, described women teachers as devoted, modest, lacking in ambition, and unconcerned about "earthly reward" (1860, p. 85). While women were supposed to bring the qualities of gentility and docility from their homes to their classrooms, they were also described as ". . . genteel, intrusive models; they were stern mother surrogates; delegated to impose social control, they often ran their classrooms with iron hands" (Greene, 1978, p. 228). The image of the docile, genteel teacher seems at odds with that of the stern, controlling mother surrogate. The life of a common school teacher during the nineteenth century must have been something of a paradox. On the one hand, women were to accept passively the lower salaries and the infantile treatment at the hands of their male administrators who sought to control the curriculum, discipline, and the moral regimen of these teachers (Greene, 1978). On the other hand,

women were to assert themselves and control as well as inculcate their students with the proper moral values (Grumet, 1983). While women teachers were expected to control their students, they were discouraged from controlling their own work since teaching became a more controlled, regulated profession during the time women teachers began to outnumber men. This increased regulation also led to its decreased attractiveness as a temporary occupation for men who then sought opportunities in other professions and in business (Apple, 1985).

Those women who taught were charged with inculcating the young with the appropriate societal norms, but these same norms often discriminated against women as well. While women teachers were expected to and probably often did engage in "pedagogy for patriarchy" (Grumet, 1981), we know little of women's perspectives of their teaching experiences. Where there women who did not passively accept these external definitions of who they were or what their work should be? Hoffman's (1981) historical research begins to fill this gap by focusing on women's accounts of their own experiences as teachers. The women of her study entered teaching for economic reasons, but they also found they were able to travel, live independently or with other women and work for social, political or spiritual change. Not only did women at times define their own purpose for teaching, but they also have resisted the bureaucratization of schools. Examples of this resistance include those who were actively engaged in organizing the Chicago Federation of Teachers which fought for salary increases during the late nineteenth century (Apple, 1983). Still another was Ella Flagg Young, the first woman superintendent of the Chicago schools, who argued against the close, degrading supervision of teachers during the early twentieth century (Greene, 1978). As women struggled with

salary inequities, attempts to control and interfere with their work as teachers, they often became interested in feminist ideas and some became leaders of the feminist movement (Apple, 1985). While attempts to control teaching have at times reproduced patriarchal relations in schools, at other times these attempts have radicalized women and spurred them to greater resistance.

The Present: Teaching Remains Women's Work

Just as we know little of women teachers' experiences from their own perspectives during the nineteenth century, we know little of these women's experiences today. What is the relationship of gender to teaching? How does being a woman influence one's teaching? We are only beginning to explore this relationship. We do know that women continue to choose teaching, composing nearly seventy-five percent of college education majors, although an increasing number of women are moving into other professions such as law, medicine, dentistry, and engineering (Feistritzer, 1983). Of all women who received bachelor's degrees in 1981, only 17.5 percent of those degrees were in education (Feistritzer, 1983). Although our society accords these other professions more status and prestige, economics makes teaching less attractive since women are increasingly becoming heads of households (Feistritzer, 1983). In Spencer's (1986) recent study of women teachers, those who were single or heads of households without additional child support had constant financial problems; often these economic difficulties provided the impetus to look for another career. However, not all women teachers suffered from financial problems. Some married teachers had comfortable lifestyles if they lived in a state or region which paid higher teaching salaries and were married to men whose salaries equaled or exceeded theirs. The

salaries of husbands or the monetary or material compensation from a divorce did make a difference between a comfortable lifestyle or one filled with financial difficulties. Apparently teaching does not allow for economic independence for women.

Why do women choose teaching? Certainly it would not be for the income, although Lortie (1975) discovered that of those occupations dominated by women, teachers' salaries were more attractive due to the shortened working year. However, the psychic rewards of seeing students learn were given as more important than income (Lortie, 1975). In Lortie's (1975), Miller's (1985, 1986), and Spencer's (1986) studies of teachers, a number of reasons were given as to why women wanted to teach including: contact with children or people, the direct or indirect influence of teachers and/or parents, positive views of school, the desire to work with a particular subject matter, and the time compatibility of teaching with caring for a home and raising a family. Some women were more vague in their responses, explaining they "fell" into teaching because they did not like other options (such as secretarial work or nursing) or were not aware of their reasons for selecting teaching (Spencer, 1986).

What are the experiences of those women who teach today? One difficulty they face is the burden of the double day or, as Spencer (1986) found, the "triple day." Even when women work outside the home, they also bear the brunt of home responsibilities including housework and child care (Hartmann, 1981; Spencer, 1986). In addition, a number of women in Spencer's study had "triple days" by teaching all day, meeting the demands of their children and home after school, and then completing schoolwork such as grading papers, maintaining records, and developing lesson plans at home. Certainly the main theme of Spencer's study is the overlap of home

and work in the lives of those women who teach. These women's home lives were affected by their extracurricular duties, their low teaching salaries, and troublesome relationships with colleagues and administrators. Just as their teaching carried over into the home, their home lives carried over into their teaching. At times these women were late for school, missed meetings, had to deal with family emergencies during the school day, were distracted or less able to teach because of personal problems, sick children, and complicated family schedules.

In addition to the demands on their time, another problem for women teachers is control. The women in Spencer's (1986) study reported they had little control over their jobs and limited interactions with those predominantly male administrators who were in control. When administrators attempted to exert control over teachers, the result was strained relationships between administrators and teachers as well as lessened satisfaction for teachers in their work. While the findings from this study support Lather's (1985) and Apple's (1983, 1985) arguments that teachers' lack of control over their work is connected to their gender, women's dissatisfaction with this lack of control also signals the potential for resistance. Most women in Spencer's study accepted the power of administrators and were fearful of "making waves," but she also found those affiliated with unions felt more in control of their work. Even though union negotiations did not address subtle forms of sexism, she described an instance in which a woman's experience with a union enabled her to disagree openly with her principal's sexist practices.

Women's struggle with control can also exist on a more subtle level. At times, women do engage in "pedagogy for patriarchy" (Grumet, 1981) by teaching in ways which support the interests of more powerful groups in

society rather than focusing on what would be best for women and men, girls and boys of various classes, races, and ethnicities (Mazza, 1984). Women are often encouraged in our society to serve and nurture others, to maintain their focus on doing for others which leads them away from discovering and acting in ways which empower themselves. Women's struggle for empowerment is often an internalized one since they must confront and deal with this notion that their womanly role, their teaching role is an altruistic, self-abnegating style of focusing on the development of others (Grumet, 1983).

In addition, Lather (1985) argues that women's subordination is built into the teaching role. While Bullough, Gitlin, and Goldstein (1984) posit that technocratic mindedness and the tradition of public service are the keys to understanding the plight of teachers, Lather contends that the gender of teachers contributes to the expectation that they will submit to bureaucratic authority, utilize commercially prepared curricular materials and rely on outside experts. However, during Miller's (1985) interviews with teachers, women often articulated their focus on students and their attempts to help them develop emotionally as well as cognitively despite the demands of the bureaucratic structure while men seemed to become more involved in the "system." While women teachers may be expected to carry out the intentions of basic skills programs, they may also quietly subvert the intentions of these programs once they close the doors of their classrooms (Grumet, 1983). According to Miller's (1986) recent research, the present emphasis on "back to basics" and minimum competency testing has put women teachers especially in conflict. Not only do they feel they must sacrifice the nurturing aspects of teaching in order to help their students master measurable learning objectives on tests, but this new emphasis on

the "professional" role as opposed to the "mothering" role has not resulted in their increased control over decision-making in curriculum and policy development.

Teacher Socialization: Women Learn to Teach

As women go through the process of becoming teachers, they bring to this process the totality of their beings including their perceptions of themselves as women and as potential teachers. As women learn to teach, do they also learn to deny, modify, or affirm particular qualities associated with their gender identity? In what ways do their perceptions of themselves as women enter into the process of learning to teach? The influence of gender on teacher socialization has largely been ignored[3] although studies are often concerned with identifying the factors most influential on preservice teachers' beliefs and actions. However, this approach to understanding the process women undergo as they learn to teach assumes they play a rather passive role. External forces apparently influence them. The difficulty with this research model is that it often simplifies and thus distorts these women's experiences.

Despite the limitations of this approach to understanding the teacher socialization process, what are the forces which apparently exert the most influence on student teachers? One frequently cited is the cooperating teacher. In Iannaccone's (1963) study, student teachers' ideas and actions regarding classroom management and levels of expectations for their students became more aligned with their cooperating teachers during their student teaching experiences. Tabachnick, Popkewitz, and Zeichner (1979-80) also found that student teachers felt pressured to conform to the teaching style of their cooperating teachers, dealt with their cooperating teachers rather passively while these more experienced teachers gave them

directions on assignments or suggestions and advice on classroom control and avoided potential conflicts by neglecting to initiate discussions of classroom problems. While recognizing they were dealing with their cooperating teachers passively, they also realized that they needed a recommendation from them, thus most of their interactions dealt with procedural and management issues.

The bureaucratic structure of schools has also been found to affect student teachers. Hoy and Rees (1977) discovered that student teachers became more custodial (stressed order, distrusted students and utilized punitive approaches to control) and bureaucratic (subordinate, impersonal, conforming, and traditional) during student teaching. However, this finding was disputed by Silvernail and Costello (1983) who found student teachers entered their student teaching experiences with a more controlling, punitive orientation toward their own students which remained unchanged during their student teaching.

Tabachnick, Popkewitz, and Zeichner (1979-80) explored the impact of a third influence, the teacher education program, on students as they learn to teach. While the ideology of the teacher education program may be liberal, they found the actual practices reinforced the conservative nature of schools. In a later article which reviewed the influence of the university in the teacher socialization literature, Zeichner and Tabachnick (1981) found support for the university's influence to be characterized at times as liberal, other times conservative, and still other times as non-existent.

Biographical forces would be yet another influence in the socialization of teachers. By closely observing their own teachers during the thousands of hours they spend as students in the small confines of

classrooms as well as the relationships they develop with their teachers, student teachers learn to teach (Lortie, 1975). This "apprenticeship of observation" forms a "latent culture" which is then activated when these students move into teaching situations. Other studies have supported Lortie's contention that students' early experiences are important influences (Petty & Hogben, 1980; Silvernail & Costello, 1983; Zeichner & Grant, 1981).

While the teacher socialization literature reveals the variety of influences on students as they are inducted into the teaching profession, often studies have neglected to view teacher socialization as a "complex process not readily captured by a simple, one factor frame of reference" (Lortie, 1973,p. 488). Certainly we need information on the various factors which influence the process of learning to teach as well as consider the complex interaction of these social structures, institutional constraints, the personal characteristics which student teachers bring to their student teaching (Zeichner & Tabachnick, 1985), and the social strategies these people utilize in dealing with their situations (Zeichner, 1980a). In addition, we need to consider the ways gender enters into this process. Not only would one's gender be an integral component of one's personal characteristics, but it could also be an important influence on the strategies one uses to deal with the various forces encountered in the student teaching experience.

In order to understand what happens to students as they learn to become teachers, Zeichner (1979) advocates taking a more dialectical model of teacher socialization which considers the variety of influences and attempts to discover how students mediate these influences. Just as the teacher is not totally molded by institutional forces, she is also not

totally free to transform the institution within which she works. However, the teacher is an active agent in the socialization process and mediates these external forces rather than becoming totally shaped by them (Goodman, 1985; Tabachnick & Zeichner, 1984; Zeichner & Grant, 1981; Zeichner & Tabachnick, 1983, 1985).

Gender and Curriculum: Can Women Teachers Make Curricular Decisions?

While the connection between gender and curriculum decision-making largely remains unexplored, women teachers are related in significant ways to the curriculum in their classrooms. Not only are they responsible for teaching a curriculum to their students, often the curriculum they do teach omits or distorts their own experiences, those of other women, as well as their students. How can they and their students find personal meaning within a curriculum if it is not connected to their own lives? Yet how much freedom do women teachers have for deciding what should be taught? Are they discouraged from making curricular decisions because they are women and therefore would not have the expertise that male administrators and professional curriculum developers would have? On the other hand, do women teachers passively follow established curricula?

Whose experiences, perspectives, and values should be included in curricula? Decisions about what should be included are value-laden because ". . . human beings invent or construct knowledge in accordance with the values and beliefs with which they begin" (Spender, 1982, p. 2). Both women's studies and critical curriculum theorists (most notably, Michael Apple) have made this link visible between knowledge and those who have the power to decide what is important to know. Apple (1979) uses Gramsci's concept of hegemony to explain how schools legitimate societal inequalities by distributing its dominant ideologies. Defined as "ideological control

through dissemination of dominant social practices, meanings, and values that become so pervasive that they saturate consciousness and become accepted as social reality" (Mazza, 1982, p. 46), hegemony is a subtle form of social control through the perpetuation of forms of consciousness rather than through direct domination. The curriculum is a site of this ideological struggle, where elite groups must wage battles to maintain their hegemony over other less powerful groups (Arnot, 1982; Mazza, 1983).

Women's studies challenges male hegemony over what is accepted knowledge (Howe, 1976) or "men's studies" (Spender, 1981). Since elite men are able to dominate knowledge production through their control of universities, research funding agencies, and publication sources (Spender, 1981), curricula often reflect a male bias. This bias then perpetuates a limited view of human experiences within the curriculum which excludes knowledge of women as well as the working class, the elderly, the disabled, non-Western cultures, racial and ethnic minorities, and nonheterosexuals (Davis, 1982; McCluskey, 1985; Spender, 1982). Women's and men's experiences should be studied together while recognizing the diversity within each gender according to culture, race, and class (Schuster & Van Dyne, 1985).

Certainly the significance of what is included and excluded within curricula, the place of curricula in educational settings, and the relationship between students, teachers, and curricula cannot be underestimated. But who has the power to decide what should be taught? Brophy (1980) contends that curriculum decision-making often is an administrative task rather than one for teachers. Her position is echoed by O'Neal and Hoffman's (1984) finding that teachers believed that curricular decision-making was moving away from the classroom although at

times they were unclear as to what curricular decisions they could make. Both teachers (Bridgeland, Duane & Stern, 1981) and student teachers (Tabachnick, Popkewitz & Zeichner, 1979-80) have reported they felt a lack of influence over what is taught, although these teachers contend that their expertise in curricular matters and their positions as curriculum deliverers should allow them to be influential in curriculum policy-making decisions (Bridgeland, Duane & Stern, 1981).

Despite the constraints teachers face in making curriculum decisions and the influence of prepared curricula on what is taught, seldom do teachers fully transmit the intentions of curriculum developers (Connelly, 1972). Evidence for the discrepancy between what curriculum developers intend and what teachers teach can be seen in the failure of "teacher proof" curricula of the 1950s and 1960s. Rather than passively following published curricula, teachers do make modifications based on their perceptions of students' needs and interests, their own beliefs about what is important to learn, and their previous teaching experiences (Brophy, 1980; Leithwood, Ross & Montgomery, 1982; Mason, 1984). At times teachers can be found to modify existing curricular material in spite of numerous administrative constraints (Kyle, 1980).

Despite the evidence that teachers do modify curricula, the influence of published curricular materials on what is taught should not be underestimated. Teachers are usually not found to be transforming the curriculum, but rather modifying what presently exists. In addition, those who develop curricular materials often view the teacher as a curriculum consumer whose responsibility is to organize instruction to achieve the established objectives (Ben-Peretz & Silberstein, 1985). However, some advocate that teachers are full partners with curriculum developers since

they are users or interpreters of published curricula rather than passive implementers (e.g., Ben-Peretz, 1975; Ben-Peretz & Lifman, 1979; Carre, Ben-Peretz & Sutton, 1977; Connelly, 1972). Rather than viewing these materials as a set of prescriptive guidelines which must be carefully followed, Ben-Peretz encourages teachers to see them as possibilities that can be molded and adapted for their own purposes, their own students, and the requirements of their situations.

In her work with teachers in developing curriculum including alternative versions from which they as well as other teachers could choose, Ben-Peretz (1980) has become more closely aligned with those who believe teachers should be empowered curriculum developers (Goodman, 1986). A "webbing" approach to curriculum development which focuses on the interests, curiosity, and knowledge of both teacher and students (Goodman, 1986; Kohl, 1976; Rachelson & Copeland, 1983), this method takes a more interdisciplinary, wholistic approach to learning. Teacher and student are co-investigators of their own questions and utilize their experiences, interests, and the resources available to them as they explore their chosen topic. While textbooks are not totally ignored, they are viewed as one source of information and no more important or objective than the teacher's and students' personal knowledge (Goodman, 1986).

METHODOLOGY

Because I was exploring the subtle and complex relationship between gender and the process of becoming a teacher, I selected field study methodology (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Dobbert, 1982; Emerson, 1983; Lincoln & Guba, 1985) because it would allow me to combine a variety of data gathering methods. I needed to observe Nancy, (all proper names are pseudonyms) the main participant of this study, as she taught, discover the

various influences she had to contend with in her classrooms as well as her own thinking, beliefs, and personal qualities which lead to her actions. I encouraged Nancy to teach me about herself (Spradley, 1979) while I attempted to develop verstehen or an interpretive understanding of her experiences as she was learning to teach and the connection between her gender and her teaching (Emerson, 1983). Since Nancy is the only person who is able to express fully her experiences from her perspective, my description is an interpretation (Smith & Heshusius, 1986).

The primary instrument of field studies methodology is the researcher herself. It is through me and my construction of what occurs during this study that the reader becomes acquainted with Nancy's ideas, personal qualities, and actions. Influential on my perceptions of Nancy's experiences were my own years of experience as an elementary teacher, my recent graduate work in women's studies, my feminist orientation and my explorations as to what that meant to my work in the elementary classroom as well as my later work in teacher education, and my desire to support and encourage those preservice teachers like Nancy who have an empowering, nurturing approach to teaching. My role as a feminist researcher is to make explicit how I arrive at my interpretation of Nancy's experiences rather than posit my description as though it were Nancy's or the only representation (Stanley & Wise, 1983).

Sample Selection

The main participant in this study was Nancy, a white, middle-class, recently married elementary education senior enrolled in a large midwestern university. I first asked Nancy to participate in my pilot study following interviews with her and five other elementary education majors who had volunteered to participate in a new extended early field experience

program.[4] During this initial case history interview Nancy articulated several views and orientations which I believed would facilitate her development into an empowered teacher. Her concern for making learning relevant to students' lives, building on their interests, integrating the various subjects, and her desire to improve schools by first improving her own classroom contributed to my selection of her as my key informant (Dobbert, 1982). In addition, I also believed Nancy had a nurturing orientation to teaching because of her comments that although she was not yet a parent, she hoped to integrate teaching with mothering by utilizing the same methods and activities with her students that she would use with her own children.

I chose this final field experience for my pilot study not only because it occurred the semester before I planned to begin my larger study of women student teachers, but also due to its conjunction with a social studies methods course.[5] The work for this course included developing an original unit of study which would then be taught in these students' field experience settings. This allowed me to observe and interview Nancy as she made curricular and pedagogical decisions during the preparation and teaching of her unit as well as interact with those students in her field experience. Through Nancy's participation in this pilot study, I was able to observe her implement some of her nurturing and empowering approaches to teaching which led me to select her as one of the three key informants for my study during her student teaching semester.

Methods of Data Collection

The primary methods of data collection were participant observation (Dobbert, 1982; Gold, 1969) and in-depth interviews (Spradley, 1979). I observed Nancy eight mornings over the course of four weeks during her

field placement which was a fourth- and fifth-grade classroom shared with Brian, another elementary education major. During the fifteen-week student teaching semester, I observed Nancy on thirteen different mornings or afternoons. Since Nancy had a special education minor, she spent the first eight weeks in a third-grade classroom and the remaining seven weeks in a special education (mildly mentally handicapped) class. I interviewed Nancy following each observation and additional interviews were held over the telephone and at my apartment. Data were recorded in field notes during the observations and on audio tapes during most interviews in order to capture Nancy's language (Spradley, 1979).

At first during these observations I focused on the physical setting of the classroom, the cooperating teachers' routine, organization, curriculum, and instructional strategies as well as the ways they interacted with their students, communicated their expectations to their students and to Nancy. I also observed Nancy and Brian's informal planning sessions, their discussions with their cooperating teacher, Tom Wilson, and Nancy's interactions with her other two cooperating teachers, Jane Hurst and Marilyn Urbach. The majority of my observations were of Nancy as she worked individually with students and taught different subjects to large and small groups. I especially concentrated on the curriculum which Nancy taught, the instructional strategies she utilized, the ways she interacted with the students in these three classrooms, and any modifications she made in the existing curriculum and routine. In addition, during these observations I reviewed Nancy's lesson plans and her student teaching journal which provided additional information on her plans for instruction as well as her feelings toward her experiences.

The purpose of the in-depth interviews was to discover the meanings

of what happened in these three classrooms to Nancy, the factors which influenced her curricular and pedagogical decisions, her interactions with students, her cooperating teachers, and Brian. The observations, lesson plans, and journal provided specific lessons, activities, and interactions which were then explored during the interviews. In addition, I sought to understand Nancy's reactions to the cooperating teachers' classroom organization, curriculum, and instructional strategies.

Following each observation and interview, I reviewed the field notes and interview tape which then provided more specific questions to guide future observations and interviews. I also collected printed material on the social studies methods course, the extended field experience program, and the student teaching program. In addition, I interviewed a number of other people involved in Nancy's field experience and her student teaching including: the professor of the social studies methods course who was also the director of the extended early field experience program, the director of the student teaching program, Brian, the three cooperating teachers, and the three university supervisors. The focus of these interviews was their expectations of field experience students and student teachers, their views of their interactions with Nancy, the curriculum she taught, the instructional strategies she used, and the ways she interacted with the students in these three classrooms.

Data Analysis

Since field studies methods involve the overlap of data collection and analysis, I used Glaser and Strauss' (1967) "constant comparative" method of analysis as a guide for understanding the data. During the study I regularly reviewed field notes and interview notes and developed preliminary conceptual categories as a way of organizing and making sense

of the data. As I collected more data, I compared these findings to my earlier categories which resulted in the modification, refinement, and/or the crystallization of these categories. Rather than allowing these categories to restrict what I observed, I sought out additional data which challenged these original categories. For example, in reviewing the data, I found a number of ways that Nancy was able to nurture her students, but I also realized the necessity to look for ways she did not. Then I sought to discover what factors encouraged and/or discouraged Nancy's nurturance of her students.

While the findings of my study are largely my own construction of Nancy's experiences, I employed several techniques to increase the trustworthiness of this study which also influenced it. One significant influence was the weekly debriefing sessions with the consultant to my study who not only challenged my ongoing analysis of the data, but also suggested additional questions for future observations and interviews. In addition, I maintained a reflexive journal including a daily schedule, methodological log, and a personal diary focusing on my reactions to my fieldwork, the weekly debriefing sessions, methodological concerns, and growing insights regarding the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This journal is an account rich in my feelings about Nancy and her teaching, my intuitive understandings of her experiences as well as vague questions which I could not yet articulate to anyone else. Still another influence was Nancy's responses to my ongoing description and analysis of her teaching experiences.

GENDER AND TEACHING: NANCY'S STRUGGLE TO NURTURE

During the period of the study, Nancy clung to an image of a classroom where children could come for nurturance, a place where she and her

students could learn together what they were interested in learning. However, she was not always sure how to create such a place. As she taught in other teachers' classrooms, she also realized her image was not often shared by those more experienced in the teaching profession. In what ways was she able to move closer to her ideal classroom? What factors encouraged her to implement her nurturing orientation to teaching? What difficulties did she encounter?

Caring for Students: An Impetus for Nurturance

> The last time Dad was here he did say he felt like I was born with this ability to get kids to like me, that kids become attached to me and I try to understand them. And he didn't think that was something that could be learned, that it just comes naturally. Maybe it is natural. I just think that kids are little people. They probably have things worth hearing more than what some adults say. They are so young and naive and have so many ideas. It's not right that I as the adult have everything to say and they have nothing to say. I love to listen to them. I think they are fascinating. (Interview 4/2/86)

> . . . I really care, I see them as people with valuable thoughts and young minds that really want to learn and they're just, they need guidance, but don't need to be pushed one way or another, they just need to be nourished. (Interview 5/22/86)

Nancy showed her concern for students not only in her interactions with the children in her classrooms, but also in deciding what to teach, what teaching strategies to use, and in evaluating the success of her teaching. She wanted her students to enjoy school, to see that learning was fun as she attempted to build on their interests and what they would like to learn. However, as Nancy struggled in various ways to realize these goals, she came into conflict with the existing routine and curriculum of her classrooms, the limitations of the student teaching role, and at times her own reluctance to be assertive with students and her cooperating teachers.

When the study began Nancy articulated a critical view of schools and

the kind of teaching that she found in her earlier field experiences. She explained that the kind of teaching that was being advocated in her university classes was not usually found in her field experiences, although she had worked with one teacher whom she considered exemplary because she was "into" the kids and "made everything interrelated with groups working at their own pace at what they wanted to do." (Interviews 9/23/86 and 7/18/86) During the three classroom experiences Nancy had, she continued to criticize the reading curriculum, the abundance of paper and pencil tasks for students, and the missing link between students' interests and their lives and the curriculum. Nancy was especially critical of the routine in her third-grade classroom.

> After the kids come in in the morning they work on their journal. They write a few sentences about a topic that Mrs. Hurst would put on the board. Like on Tuesday they wrote about Martin Luther King. . . now they just seem to show their journal writing to Mrs. Hurst to show that they have it done so they can go to gym or recess. I don't think they really turn it in to get a grade. They work on their vocabulary from the reading books, and their spelling. And then Mrs. Hurst takes care of business such as collecting money for field trips, lunch counts, homework, or anything she needs to talk about with the kids. . . . I think they start with a reading group, that's what they did on Monday, I'm not sure. Whenever she works with one reading group, the rest of the students are doing phonics and handwriting. There is a morning recess and after recess they continue working. They are getting all these papers and I'm not really sure where they are coming from. Sometimes they work with vocabulary with their spelling words and work on a phonics book. After this recess they try to do all the work that has been assigned to them. After lunch and the lunch recess she reads to them out of this book which I think is too mature for third grade. The kids would sometimes listen to the book and sometimes I think they are lost. . . . Everything seems disorganized and I don't know the schedule. . . it changes from day to day. The feel I get anyway is the overall shuffling of papers and kids always coming back and trying to finish something and I have kinda missed what's going on with direct instruction. In the afternoon they do have math and they do go over it. (Interview 1/22/86)

> Today was not my day. There is a little stress at home plus the frustration I am feeling with the school placement. I know that the children must also be frustrated. They are never given any time to do anything. They are constantly given assignments to keep them busy. (Nancy's Journal 1/24/86)

Generally Nancy described this classroom as "boring and stupid" (Interview 4/2/86) because the assignments and papers were not meaningful to the students. The curriculum was used to keep the children busy and in their seats. Nancy disagreed with this approach because she saw its negative effects on students.

Another area of criticism was the reading curriculum which Nancy discovered in her field experience that the students did not like. During both her third grade placement and her special education experience she generally followed the adopted basal reading program (with some modifications) and continued to complain that both she and her students found it boring. Mrs. Urbach, Nancy's cooperating teacher, described the reading series used in her special education class as ". . . paced nice and slow but yet will incorporate all the basic reading skills that they need, a lot of strong phonics skills." (Interview 4/28/86) However, Nancy was especially critical of it.

> They have the vocabulary, "we, on, dog, you, he, and those" are the only words in the story. It's like "See Jane run. Run Jane run." It's that sort of thing. But even worse, you would never say the sentence, "We can go." You would never say that, but we would say "We can go to the store." But you can't put "to the store" in the story because it's not in the vocabulary. So you just have to have "You can go." I have got to figure something out, I am not comfortable with it. (Interview 4/2/86)

Here again I heard Nancy complaining about the lack of meaning of what was being taught to the students in her classroom, that the way language was portrayed in the reading program was not her language or that of her students. In addition, Nancy critiqued another aspect of the special education reading program based on the disparity she found between what her students enjoyed and what the curriculum included. While her students would come to the reading groups asking to read, the structure of the program allowed for reading a story only one day a week. The other days

were spent working on vocabulary and the reading workbooks.

When she entered her student teaching semester, Nancy hoped that she would be able to implement a number of her ideas about teaching and believed that she would be the "head honcho" (Interview 1/17/86) in the classroom. However, she also wanted to work with and involve her cooperating teacher and the teacher's aide and hoped that some things she implemented would be continued after she left. Just as she was discouraged by her cooperating teacher's routine during her field experience, Nancy began questioning how much change she could make in this routine during her student teaching experience. She quickly discovered that she was not free to implement all her ideas; she also had to adapt to her cooperating teacher's curriculum and routine. However, in many ways she was able to realize her nurturing orientation to teaching.

A View of a Nurturing Approach to Teaching

Rather than remaining a constant critic, Nancy also developed curricula which included the integration of several disciplines around a common theme and chose instructional strategies promoting students' participation, interest, self-expression, cooperation, and understanding. She strived to build on students' interests and questions in her original curricula as well as provide opportunities for students to teach one another. While some curricular areas (such as reading and math) were modified rather than significantly changed, Nancy strove to "integrate more exciting, more kid-oriented, interest things" (Interview 4/7/86) with what presently existed. Her focus on students was also evident in her modifications of the existing discipline practices and her use of students' responses to evaluate and modify her own teaching.

During the two semesters of the study Nancy developed several original

curricular units dealing with such topics as the Civil War, Taiwan, dental health, spring, and zoo animals. While the amount of classroom time spent on her own curricula was less than that spent on the established curricula, Nancy did spend some time nearly every week teaching original units. Her special education placement appeared to offer the greatest amount of freedom in curriculum development and it was here that she created and taught her units on spring, dental health, and zoo animals.

Generally Nancy seemed to have more freedom to choose the topics of her units since she would be developing them, although her cooperating teachers did influence these decisions at times too. Nancy's decision to teach a brief unit on spring was based on her desire to make her students aware of spring, a season when things were growing. Developing the zoo animals mini-unit came about because Nancy knew her cooperating teacher, Marilyn Urbach, had planned a trip to the zoo and she wanted her students to become more knowledgeable of the animals they would find there. For the major unit of Nancy's special education placement, Marilyn had encouraged Nancy to develop a science, self-help unit, but Nancy made the final decision to teach dental health. I asked Nancy to explain why she had chosen this subject.

> Last summer I gave a speech on teeth and I think it's important to take care of your teeth. I do notice teeth. There are some kids who are on medication which has a bad effect on teeth and they all need to brush their teeth. But if the home doesn't practice brushing it's up to the kids to brush. Why I wanted to do it here was that I wanted the kids to get into the habit, to know what it felt like to have clean teeth. So maybe they would miss their clean teeth when their plaque would start building up. (Interview 4/2/86)

In learning of Nancy's reasons for choosing these topics, I could see the influence of her concern for her students. She desired to increase their awareness of their environment, of the seasonal changes, and the animals they would encounter during their visit to the zoo so that experience would

be more meaningful to them. In addition, she wanted them to learn about their bodies and how to care for them. However, I also heard her affirm her right to decide what was important to teach and what her students should learn.

Nancy appeared to have less freedom to select the topics for her units in her field experience placement and in her third grade classroom. Tom Wilson, the field experience cooperating teacher, had given Nancy and Brian (her field experience partner) the choice of teaching a social studies unit on pioneers or the Civil War whereas Jane Hurst had already decided to teach a special unit on Taiwan to a group of "advanced" third-grade students since one of these "advanced" students was from Taiwan. Jane suggested that Nancy assume responsibility for developing and teaching this unit, although she and the school librarian provided Nancy with some assistance in the beginning. Even though Nancy did not freely select the topics for these units, she eventually made them her own by including what she and the students thought important and interesting to learn about the Civil War and Taiwan.

While Nancy did not develop any other units of study, she did teach a number of "hands-on" science lessons and creative writing activities during her third grade student teaching experience. Some of the ideas for these activities came from her university classes while others had been discovered on her own. When I asked Nancy why she developed these science lessons she explained that both she and the students liked science and they had indicated in the book I Want to Learn About which she had placed in the classroom that they wanted to learn about science. Nancy told me she included those science topics which she knew something about (magnets, the human body, sound, seasons, and Halley's comet) because according to

Herbert Kohl, "the teacher should bring to class what she knows." She added that these lessons gave students the opportunity to work together which she believed they needed. (Interviews 2/11/86 and 3/7/86)

Nancy's writing activities came about in response to her criticisms of the existing writing routine. She explained that she was anxious for the students to write more than three sentences since a typical prompt would be, "Tell what you have learned about Taiwan in three or more sentences." She thought, "Describe something that our guest speaker told you that you found particularly interesting" would encourage students to go beyond writing, "I learned about houses. I learned they had phones." (Interview 3/7/86) Nancy included opportunities for students to choose their own topics by encouraging them to develop a list of possible titles in their own "author's file," work on their stories for a few days, share them in an "author's circle," revise, and finally publish the final draft. When she discovered that for some students the author's file was too big a leap from writing three sentences, she also included short-term journal writing opportunities. For example, one morning while I was observing, Nancy read the book Everybody Needs a Rock to the class, showed the children her own special rock, solicited their ideas for special things they thought everyone would need, and wrote their ideas on the chalkboard. She then gave them the assignment to write at least two rules for finding this special thing. The children were a bit inattentive while Nancy read, seemed to find the assignment confusing, and were reluctant to begin it, so she spent additional time explaining the assignment and helping individual students. (Observation 2/27/86) Nancy told me she chose this activity because she knew some of the children liked rocks. She added that some students later brought their own rocks to show the class, and one boy told

a story about his rocks. (Interviews 3/11/86 and 7/18/86) In addition to the journal writing and the author's file, Nancy also developed several creative writing activities at learning centers in this classroom. When children would complete one of these activities, first they would read a book which had a distinct pattern such a phrase or sentence which was repeated again and again in the story. Then students could compose their own phrases or stories by following the "author's pattern." Nancy explained why she had created these learning centers.

> It also gives them an activity. They can get up and move. It's a physical thing so they are not in their seats twenty-four hours a day. With the writing, they need to work on this. And it introduces them to authors. Some of them have used "the important thing about" writing style in their own stories. So this got them introduced to other kinds of writing and helps them to feel like they can write so they don't have to think about all the details. They can follow the author's pattern and use their own ideas. I know they seem inhibited. They are worrying about the topic sentence. They have the idea that the topic sentence is first. I want them to feel at ease with writing. They begin their stories by saying, "This is what my story is about." I think the writing center helps them to feel more at ease with their writing and that they can write. (Interview 1/30/86)

Rather than have students write in a mechanistic fashion such as beginning with a topic sentence and writing a specified number of sentences, Nancy was encouraging them to experience writing in a more meaningful way. She gave them opportunities to link their interests with their writing, to think and write creatively, and to express themselves through their writing. When Nancy shared her own interests and knowledge with students through these science and writing activities, she was also sharing herself and making her teaching a more personal activity. By including those activities which were of interest to her students, she was also encouraging them to share themselves and find personal meaning in what they were learning. The curriculum was not simply something "out there" that she and her students went through, but was connected to their lives.

In addition to developing science and writing lessons, Nancy also included several disciplines in her original curricula as well as in her modifications of the existing curriculum. At times an interdisciplinary approach was used to enhance the present curriculum such as including an art project on textures to accompany a story from the reading textbook about a blind person or reading the book Alexander Who Used to be Rich Last Sunday as an introduction to the mathematical concept of money. Rather than simply use the math workbook to introduce the children to money, Nancy thought the use of this book provided a much more "'real' money situation." (Nancy's Journal 1/31/86) This interdisciplinary approach was much more elaborate in the units she developed. Since Nancy liked art, she often included it as well as reading and writing activities in her curricula. Nancy's dental health unit included singing, eating various foods and discussing their effects on the teeth, brushing their teeth, using disclosing tablets, making plaster of paris teeth, playing games dealing with dental health concepts, and listening to books. In the Taiwan unit, the students learned about this country by engaging in cooperative research, viewing films, listening to a Chinese folktale, a guest speaker as well as the classmate from Taiwan, eating foods and playing a game from there. They expressed what they learned to the rest of the class by making maps, charts, filmstrips, and models as well as giving oral presentations. By including several disciplines and a variety of activities, Nancy was giving her students more opportunities for learning. She and her students were actively involved in exploring various aspects of Taiwan rather than reading about this country in a social studies textbook.

Nancy's concern for students was evident in her interdisciplinary approach which broadened her students' experiences of a particular topic

and also in the instructional strategies she chose. Nancy explained that she wanted to encourage student participation since "learning experiences that require students to become actively involved will be remembered long after the workbooks have been put away." (Nancy's social studies methods paper) For example, in her science lesson on magnets, she urged her students to experiment with magnets to discover what objects in the classroom were attracted to a magnet and which were not. Still another way that Nancy promoted student participation in her spring unit was by having the students plant marigold seeds and measure these plants as they grew.

Stimulating students' interest as well as building on their existing interests and questions were also important to Nancy and were evident in the methods she used for teaching. To catch their students' interest, Nancy and Brian began their Civil War unit by dressing up as representatives of the North and South and debating several issues which led to the outbreak of the war. Nancy also became "Detective Decay" who was detecting tooth decay, finding out what caused it, and stopping it during her introductory dental health lesson. She explained that she really "hammed it up" during this activity because if the kids were not excited about the curriculum from the beginning and thought it was boring, the entire unit could "bomb." (Interview 4/21/86)

In addition to promoting student interest in the curriculum, Nancy also provided students with opportunities to explore what they were interested in learning in both the Civil War and the Taiwan units since "Children are full of questions worthy of being answered." (Nancy's social studies methods paper) In their Civil War unit Nancy and Brian developed a curriculum web with their students which included those aspects of this subject the students were interested in exploring. I was able to observe

this process.

> Brian was leading the class discussion, "What would you like to learn about the Civil War?" Nancy was recording their ideas on a web on the chalkboard. Boys were offering ideas such as soldiers and ammunition. After a few minutes, Nancy stepped forward to stand by Brian, looked at the girls in the class and said, "What about us women? What did women do in the war when the men left to become soldiers?" One girl responded, "They stayed home and cried" (laughter). Nancy then led a discussion on what women's roles were during the war. (Observation 10/11/85)

I asked Nancy to explain why she stepped in and asked girls for their ideas. She elaborated, "I felt upset that Brian seemed to be interacting mostly with the boys on that side of the room and only a couple of girls were contributing." (Interview 10/11/85) Rather than allow boys' interests to dominate the discussion of what they would like to learn, Nancy also made a point of soliciting input from the girls so that everyone's interests would be included in the web. Following this web activity, the students were given a choice as to which topic they wanted to work with others in researching. Although only one student selected the role of women in the war, Nancy combined this topic with another so that the students could become more aware of women's activities during the Civil War. While I saw her encouraging her students to research what they were most interested in learning about, I also saw her urging them to increase their knowledge in an area she considered important. When I asked Nancy why she wanted her students to learn about women's roles in the war, she explained, "It might lead them to have a better attitude toward women." (Interview 11/13/85)

In addition to building on her students' interests and including topics she thought were valuable for them to explore, Nancy also believed "children [should] learn to cooperate and respect each other's ideas." (Nancy's social studies methods paper) She encouraged cooperation as well

as provided opportunities for students to teach one another through these small research groups in both the Civil War and the Taiwan units. Nancy assisted the students as they searched for information on their topics and also as they learned to work with others. At times working together was more difficult than completing the research.

> Three boys were working on bamboo. Nancy asked them, "What do you want to say about bamboo?" After they answered, she said, "Okay, you are going to tell what bamboo is used for. Now, how are you going to show this?" They began working and having some difficulties because one boy said he was doing everything, he was writing down some information and the other boys weren't doing anything. . . . Nancy announced to the whole group, "You need to work as a group. You need to assign jobs. One person could write, but how else could the others work with that person?" . . . again the boys who were working together on bamboo were having a lot of difficulty. Two of the boys were sort of yukking it up and one boy was writing. The boy who was writing came over and told Nancy that what he had on paper he had done but that the other boys really weren't helping him very much. So then Nancy went over and talked with the two boys who didn't seem to be contributing. To one of the boys she said, "Are you not happy working with bamboo? Do you not feel as if you are contributing to the group?" (Observation 1/30/86)

Nancy wanted to encourage cooperation in her third-grade classroom because of the way these children treated each other. I had observed a number of arguments and fights among these students (as well as interceded when I was concerned that someone might get hurt) and Nancy expressed her frustration with their behavior, "Today I wanted the children to stop all this physical contact; head locks, hands over mouths, twisting arms, etc." (Nancy's Journal 1/24/86) She treated her students with consideration and respect and wanted them to treat one another similarly.

> More and more I feel that this class needs more "practice" in cooperation skills. They, for the most part, do not work well in groups and do not share. Example: Tom needed to borrow a dictionary, asked Mary, "Do you have a dictionary?" as he went to take it. Mary pushed him. (Nancy's Journal 2/3/86)

In her field experience, fourth- and fifth-grade classroom, Nancy was concerned about the constant segregation of the girls and boys and was

anxious to provide opportunities for them to work together. When these students selected their Civil War research topics, they again segregated themselves by sex. Rather than modify their choices, Nancy assigned both girls and boys to another activity, painting the union and confederate flags and making maps of the underground railroad and the union and confederate states. When I asked her why she thought it was important to provide girls and boys with opportunities to cooperate with one another, she responded.

> Boys have the attitude that they're better than girls. During recess at school one day, Brian got a soccer game going between the boys and the girls and I heard one boy say, "We're better than girls!" Boys and girls can work together. At this age they say, "Gross, I'm not sitting by ____!" When Sally [a student] was sitting between two boys, she said it was "gross." I want to alleviate the stigma of boys and girls, like "Oh, gosh, he's not so bad, he's helpful," or "She knows a lot." (Interview 11/5/85)

In addition to including instructional strategies which fostered cooperation and peer teaching among her students, Nancy also wanted to include those which enhanced her students' understanding of the subject. For example, in math she was concerned that students understand the concept of multiplication and subtraction with regrouping rather than simply how to compute these kinds of problems. Nancy used manipulatives for the purpose of increasing her students' understanding, but discovered at times they were more of a distraction rather than a help. To assist their students develop a concept of history since the Civil War was an historical unit of study, she and Brian had students draw their own timelines representing their personal histories.

Nancy's desire to nurture her students seemed apparent in her curriculum development, in the kinds of instructional strategies she utilized, and in ways she evaluated and modified her teaching. The criteria she used for evaluating the success of a particular lesson seemed to be: Did the students enjoy it? Were they interested? Did they learn from it? As

Nancy would talk about what she was teaching, she often described the students' responses. An example of this can be seen in her description of her students' reactions to stories she and her students composed because of her frustration with the stories in the reading textbooks.

> With the Q Berts [reading] group the other day we wrote a story. I would like to do that more. One of their vocabulary words was dog so I said, "Let's write a story about a dog." So we wrote a story about a dog and they read it back, they didn't know it exactly, but they were really excited about that. (Interview 4/7/86)

> I tried the circus story. Sam and Tanya were really excited and contributed to the story. Beverly was <u>not</u> on task. (Nancy's Journal 4/9/86)

In addition, Nancy seemed sensitive to her students' responses as she was teaching and made adjustments according to these responses. For example, during one of my observations of a zoo animals lesson, she read a book to the children which gave three clues about a particular animal, then gave them an opportunity to guess what animal the clues described. Nancy then told the students they were going to play a game similar to charades during which they would have to act out a particular animal. The first child to participate in the game picked a card from the bag which had a picture of an animal on it and rather than acting out this animal, he gave clues and then the other students responded with guesses. Nancy simply went along with this modification of her original assignment. When I asked her why she modified this assignment she explained.

> After I wanted them to think of an animal and think about what this animal acted like and then act it out, but then when they got up here, at first, well, gosh maybe they haven't seen this animal so it would be really hard to act out an animal that you had never really seen so it would be easier to describe it like through a picture or something. And so then I just had them do a guessing game. . . . when they started describing, I did start thinking when I looked at some of those cards, I thought, gosh I wouldn't know what to do to act this out. And so I just thought it was better, they were doing something constructive with it and it was kinda the same as the book so that was fine. (Interview 5/7/86)

Still another way Nancy was able to show her concern for students was through the modifications she made of the existing discipline approaches. Discipline seemed to be a particularly troublesome aspect of teaching for her because she did care about the students, was sensitive to their feelings, and was reluctant play an authority role with them. Often Nancy talked of her difficulties in controlling the students. At times they did not listen to her and follow her directions, yet she did not want to become a controlling teacher. She appeared to be juggling her rights and her students' rights, trying to find a balance between them.

In Nancy's special education placement, her cooperating teacher, Marilyn Urbach, had established four classroom rules, "1. Keep your hands and feet to yourself. 2. Work and play quietly. 3. Follow directions. 4. Be polite to your friends and your teachers." When students would break these rules, they would get a check. One check would result in a five-minute time-out, three checks would cost them a recess, and six checks would result in a phone call to the student's home. (Observation 3/27/86) Nancy told Marilyn that she had problems with discipline and Marilyn could see that she had difficulty asserting herself with the students, so Marilyn encouraged her to raise her voice, be firmer, and give time-outs so the students would take her seriously. While Nancy followed Marilyn's advice, she learned this was not her style of discipline. She also believed it was important to add a reasoning component rather than simply tell the child to go to time-out.

> . . . discipline, dealing with these little behaviors where you're compelled just to be the authoritarian and say, "Hey, sit down!" and just order them around, but yet knowing that that's really not, they're not learning anything by that and you're just negating any good rapport that you're having with the kids to reason and stuff, you're not reasoning if you're just ordering the kids around so why should they reason or try to reason and start ordering other kids around. That's the problem, that conflict between the immediacy of saying, "Go to your seats" and then with the realization that it would

be better to rationalize or make sure that they understand why it is they can't play with that stuff. (Interview 5/22/86)

Nancy was able to make this discipline approach more her own by spending time talking with the students about why they were given a time-out and encouraging them to think of ways they could change their behavior.

Encouragements and Constraints to a Nurturing Teaching Style

What factors helped Nancy to nurture her students through her teaching? Nancy believed that her inclination to become a nurturing teacher was rooted in her childhood. As she was growing up her father had encouraged her to care for things rather than hurt them.

> He would always let the spiders go, not smoosh every bug and kill things. That made it more nurturing. There would be several times birds would run into our windows and we would go down and save them. As a child it's always been saving things. Dad would always say, "Why crush the spider? Let it outside. It's a little thing and it won't hurt you." And that carried over to everything. (Interview 4/2/86)

Nancy found support for her nurturing orientation through the teacher education program she was enrolled in as well as a degree of freedom she found in her field experience and student teaching placements to implement her teaching style. At times some factors were both constraining and encouraging.

The social studies methods course seemed especially influential. It was here that Nancy found a number of ideas that seemed to fit with her nurturing orientation. For example, she reported that this course affirmed her idea that the students and their teacher should cooperatively research what they were interested in learning with the teacher learning along with the students. The course introduced a method of realizing this idea, designing a curriculum web consisting of the topics the students and teacher wanted to explore, then using a variety of sources to collect information on these topics. The original curricular unit would include

this cooperative research. Since the professor of this course advocated that teachers should develop curriculum rather than follow along with the adopted textbooks, he included information on materials and resources to assist in the curriculum development process which Nancy drew upon during the study. This professor also encouraged Nancy and Brian to include information on common people during the Civil War rather than focus solely on famous people (Interview with social studies professor 11/5/85) which provided support for them to include information on women, slaves, and the common soldier. In addition, Nancy apparently continued to view this professor as a source of support and assistance in curriculum development after she left his class since she consulted with him as she was creating her Taiwan unit during her student teaching experience.

Nancy also incorporated ideas from her science and reading classes into her nurturing teaching style. These courses provided tangible ways for her to allow her students to be actively involved in exploring various phenomena (such as magnetism and sound), to express themselves, and to write about topics especially interesting to them. Nancy's desire to teach in a more interdisciplinary style was supported by her reading course which introduced the integration of reading and writing activities. Teacher's journals and commercially developed materials also proved to be valuable sources of ideas which Nancy included in her original curricula and lessons.

At times some factors provided constraints as well as support for Nancy's nurturing orientation. For example, the students in her third-grade classroom took a standardized achievement test during her student teaching experience. Since a component of the test was a section on writing, the principal had urged the teachers to work on writing and the

cooperating teacher, Jane Hurst, included journal writing in the daily routine. This test provided support for the inclusion of Nancy's writing activities, although her activities had a different focus than Jane's journal writing. While Nancy did not ignore the mechanics of writing, she seemed primarily to be encouraging students to express themselves, write creatively, and link their interests with their writing. Jane, on the other hand, reported that she concentrated on grammar. (Interview with Jane 3/6/86) Apparently Jane linked the writing the students did in the classroom to this test because when Nancy asked if the children could write stories in small groups, Jane's response was that they would not be able to write in groups during this test. (Interview with Nancy 1/22/86)

Still another factor which was both enabling and constraining was the cooperating teacher's schedule and the amount of time allotted to the established curriculum. During Nancy's third-grade experience, this curriculum was largely defined by textbooks and consumed the majority of the school day. However, there was no established schedule during which the curriculum would occur. Nancy found it frustrating not to have a schedule because she did not know when she could fit in things she would like for the students to do. Despite this nebulous time structure, Jane apparently had particular expectations as to what Nancy should teach.

> It's hard for student teachers to deviate real far from what's available and what's there already. . . . she is forced into the curriculum already there. We have spelling from a spelling book, phonics from a phonics book, math from a math book. (Interview with Jane 3/6/86)

In addition, Nancy was to include the social studies textbook and the basal reading textbook and workbooks as part of the established curriculum. At times Jane was very specific in her expectations. For example, Nancy

reported that Jane encouraged her to spend no longer than three days on a story from the reading textbook and to complete two chapters in the social studies textbook. Apparently, Jane also had in mind the amount of time which Nancy should spend on writing.

> One morning last week the kids were spending a lot of time working on their author's file and I didn't put any other assignments or even write the vocabulary words on the board because I wanted the kids to concentrate on the author's file. This went on for a half hour to forty-five minutes and then finally Mrs. Hurst asked me if I was going to add another assignment for them to do, so I went to the board and wrote the vocabulary words. (Interview 2/16/86)

The only curricular area which did not include a textbook was science, so Nancy was free to develop her own science activities. Nancy explained that without a set schedule, often Jane did not find time for science. Since the principal took the "advanced" students out of the classroom to work on science a couple of times a week, Nancy scheduled her science lessons with the remainder of the students during this time. Nancy was also able to develop the Taiwan unit, although Jane placed some constraints on it. Jane structured this unit as an activity which the "advanced" students would do whereas Nancy wanted to include all students. Although all students participated in some activities during this unit, generally Jane's intent was that this group of students would bring information about Taiwan back to the entire class. (Interview with Jane 3/6/86) In addition, Nancy reported that the assistance she received from Jane and the school librarian made the unit boring since they wanted the students to research agricultural products. After they collected information and displayed their research on this topic, she and the students went on to explore those aspects of Taiwan they were more interested in learning about.

In Nancy's special education classroom, the established curriculum was reading and math, taught through adopted textbooks, which consumed

approximately one-half the instructional time. While Marilyn Urbach, Nancy's cooperating teacher, expected Nancy to "come in and take over the basic routine" including the reading and math groups, she also expected her to develop units of study since there were no social studies or science textbooks. Marilyn explained that the wide range of students in this class made it difficult to find one science or social studies textbook which would be appropriate for everyone. (Interview with Marilyn 4/28/86) Not only did Nancy have much more freedom to develop units in this classroom, but the schedule allowed her to include activities from her units at different times during the day. For example, after the students arrived in the morning, they had a "calendar" time during which they would sit in a circle, share experiences, and discuss the date. Nancy also could include a dental health song or zoo animals stretching exercises. There was another period immediately preceding lunch during which another unit activity could take place in addition to the time set aside in the afternoon for her unit lessons. While Marilyn wanted Nancy to develop curriculum, she gave her a great deal of freedom to choose the topics of her units as well as what they would encompass. Nancy and Brian also were free to include what they wanted in their Civil War unit which they taught in their field experience placement.

Nancy's relationship with her cooperating teacher was another factor which at times impeded her nurturing approach and at other times encouraged it. Although Nancy often was critical of the curriculum and routine established in these three classrooms, she usually did not share these criticisms with her cooperating teachers. Frequently she went along with the existing routine rather than change it. However, there were times that she sought to make changes by quietly modifying what presently existed or

by discussing her ideas with her cooperating teachers which might lead to the chance to implement them. Despite the differences Nancy saw between herself and all three of her cooperating teachers, she still wanted to have an amicable relationship with each of them. She hoped that they could share ideas, that her ideas would be heard, and that she would be given some freedom to implement her ideas. Generally, Nancy found her needs met in her relationships with two of her cooperating teachers, Tom and Marilyn. When the lines of communication between herself and her cooperating teacher were limited and the restrictions many, Nancy's frustrations with such a relationship consumed the energy she could have directed into her teaching. Her relationship with Jane Hurst was a source of constant frustration.

When Nancy began her student teaching in Jane's classroom, Jane offered very little information on the curriculum or the classroom routine. The pattern then became that anything Nancy wanted to know, she had to ask Jane, discover through observations, or follow what she perceived to be the routine and wait for Jane to clarify it. Whenever Nancy would arrive at school with her questions, she discovered that Jane would be busy getting things ready for the day or she would begin talking about something else or she would explain that she was in a bad mood or she would give a generalized response, such as, "That will come with experience." Nancy also reported feeling intimidated by Jane which made it more difficult for her to initiate conversations. As the semester went on, Jane told Nancy's university supervisor that she recognized that she and Nancy were very different teachers which apparently became still another reason to limit her communication with Nancy. (Interview with Nancy 3/6/86)

While Nancy explained that she eventually gave up on communicating with Jane, she also discovered a number of restrictions as the semester

went on. Jane at first told Nancy she could do what she wanted in her classroom, then when Nancy would offer an idea, Jane would begin placing limitations. For example, during the first week of student teaching, I observed Nancy telling Jane she would like to set up learning centers and Jane agreed, but added, "Maybe they should do these learning centers after they do their work or you can try what you want." (Observation 1/22/86) Since Nancy did not find any available space in the classroom for her centers, she said she spent two weeks encouraging Jane to clean off a table so she could begin setting up her activities. In addition, apparently Nancy followed Jane's subtle suggestion to include the learning centers as activities when all other assignments were completed because she reported that generally they were used by only those students who worked quickly.

The students were also influential in both encouraging and discouraging Nancy as she tried to realize her nurturing orientation to teaching. At times, students would enthusiastically respond to a creative writing lesson or enter the classroom in the morning with the question, "Are we having science today?" in the hopes of hearing an affirmative response. However, there were other times that they played with and argued about the objects Nancy brought to help them understand mathematical concepts and became loud and reluctant to listen to her as she led science activities. When Nancy tried to change the usual routine of the students sitting in their seats completing paper and pencil tasks, the students had difficulties adjusting to more freedom and a variety of activities. On occasion they provided pressure to continue the existing routine, but there were other instances in which they rewarded Nancy for her efforts to make the classroom more interesting and meaningful for them.

Certainly Nancy encountered a number of constraints as well as factors

which encouraged her to nurture students through her teaching. While she was able to catch a glimpse of her nurturing approach in action, she also often went along with her cooperating teachers' expectations. "Going along" was not something she casually decided. Instead, this decision caused a great deal of conflict. "Disappointed in self. Wanting to be a competent teacher that sparks interest in students but seeing myself just going along with the established routine (sigh)." (Nancy's Journal 2/4/86)

Although at times Nancy did appear simply to fit into what existed in her student teaching settings, I also discovered that she developed a number of rationales for doing so. One was that these classrooms were not her own and while she could modify the existing curriculum and routine, she could not change her cooperating teachers. These more experienced teachers would not follow through with the changes she might make. Jane Hurst told Nancy that a previous student teacher had rearranged the classroom, but she changed it back after this student teacher left. Nancy also explained that she did not think it was fair to the students for her to come into the classroom, disrupt it, and then leave. I told Nancy that I had discovered that children were very flexible, they quickly learned they were supposed to act one way for the classroom teacher, another way for the music teacher, and still another way for the art teacher. After her student teaching was over I asked Nancy again if her reluctance to change things was because of the students.

> It's a time thing. I am going to leave. The change might often be nice for the kids and they could adapt, but I knew Jane wouldn't pick up where I left off. As a student teacher to come into somebody else's class and change things--that's being pushy and not very bureaucratically correct to worry about my stuff and not take her into consideration. (Interview 7/18/86)

Related to Nancy's reluctance to make changes in another person's classroom was her difficulty with assertiveness. She was hesitant to "step

on toes" not only during her classroom experiences but in personal relationships. Rather than contradict someone else, she often chose to remain silent which meant that her ideas did not receive a hearing. I asked Nancy if this reluctance to disagree with her cooperating teachers was related to their evaluative role.

> I would hope they would give me a good evaluation, yet I didn't want to do things to get a good evaluation. In student teaching, you're kind of obligated to do what the cooperating teacher is doing. I would hate to go in and mess something up. Maybe the teacher doesn't feel you've done what she wanted to get done. If you're just experimenting--you are in someone else's class. If my class tried something and it didn't work, I could compensate, but the cooperating teacher wouldn't have a chance to fix what I did. I think it's risky to make changes, especially with reading which is such an important part of the curriculum. They feel they have to follow the book and the worksheets. (Interview 7/18/86)

While Nancy continued to hold onto her goals for students and what she believed should go on in classrooms, she also apparently perceived that she was limited by the student teaching role, the short amount of time in these classrooms, and her lack of experience in how to realize these goals.

Another way Nancy was able to deal with following the set routine was viewing this as an opportunity to learn, although she explained that she was "learning a lot of things that I would never do." (Interview 2/16/86). In addition, doing something with which she disagreed also served as an impetus for discovering ways to change it. For example, several times during our interviews, Nancy described a number of different ways she might teach reading which stemmed from her criticism of the existing curriculum and the use of meaningless worksheets to keep students quiet during the reading period.

Nurturance and Empowerment

In what ways did Nancy's nurturing teaching style empower her students? Certainly these children and their interests were affirmed

because they were included in the curriculum. Nancy's students were able to experience learning as an exploration of what they were interested in exploring, that what they were learning was an extension of themselves. They were also given opportunities to develop a sense of community with other students and with Nancy as they investigated, shared information, taught, and learned together with everyone's ideas being valued. Nancy also showed her students that she valued their participation and interest in the curriculum by including a variety of instructional activities. By learning about a particular topic through diverse activities, her students could discover that art, reading, and writing were ways to enlarge their understandings of their topic as well as ways to express what they had learned rather than separate subjects that occurred at established periods during the school day.

While Nancy strived to help students make connections between the curriculum and their own lives and to increase their understandings of themselves, she also encouraged them to explore beyond themselves. By including ways children could experience some aspects of another culture such as eating their food and playing their games, she was also providing opportunities for them to discover similarities as well as differences in people living in different parts of the world. By including the experiences of slaves and women during the Civil War period, Nancy was exposing her students to a broader picture of human experiences in our own culture. Learning about the culture and experiences of others is also a way of promoting understanding and concern for others. Nancy gave this opportunity to her students.

Nancy's nurturing approach was also empowering for herself. She had observed the effects of boring, meaningless papers and assignments on

children and wanted to provide ways for students to learn and enjoy their time in her classroom. Her concern for her students provided the impetus to spend much additional time developing curricula, preparing interesting activities, evaluating and modifying her teaching. However, Nancy also engaged in these activities for herself. She also wanted to enjoy her time in the classroom. Including her own interests and knowledge in the curriculum made teaching a more meaningful, personal activity. She sought ways to invest herself in her teaching rather than follow along with a textbook.

While Nancy showed a willingness to become a cultural transformer rather than a cultural transmitter (Lather, 1985), she was also discouraged from doing so by the many constraints she encountered during her classroom experiences. Perhaps her nurturing, empowering orientation can be strengthened by our support, our assistance in negotiating with these constraints, and our own work to diminish those constraints which impede all of us.

NOTES

1. Gender is a subtle, yet integral component of who one is, how one views the world, and relates to others. While gender is a cultural phenomenon, it is based on a biological distinction. Who one is involves the complex interaction of biology and culture since all known societies differentiate among its members according to their sex (see Rosaldo & Lamphere, 1974). We live our lives in female and male bodies; we come to know the world and the world interacts with us through our physical being. We also come to know to some degree what characteristics, behaviors, and activities our culture expects of us because we are women or men. However, we often do not live out these cultural norms, but rather we accommodate and resist these messages (see Anyon, 1984).

2. My conception of nurturing is linked to empowerment since teaching which promotes the importance of and respect for personal experiences, knowledge, interests, and perspectives also empowers those teachers and students to make decisions about what they should teach and learn. Making this teaching/learning process personally meaningful also stimulates interest in the continued exploration of who one is, the world in which one lives, one's relationships with others, and one's place in the world. While this approach to teaching affirms the worth of all people, it also stresses the interconnectedness of all people. Our right to explore what we find most interesting must be balanced with our obligation to learn about the full range of human experiences.

3. Lortie's (1975) work is an exception.

4. The extended field experience program was designed to give preservice teachers more classroom teaching opportunities prior to their student teaching semester. Students who enrolled in this field experience were placed in an elementary classroom for three mornings a week for eight weeks rather than the typical field placement of one morning or afternoon a week for ten weeks. The structure of this program provided me with more opportunities for observations in a shorter period of time.

5. For a more complete description of this course see Goodman (1986).

6. This professor, Jesse Goodman, also served as a consultant to this study.

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